

MEMO

DATE: January 18, 2005

TO: Regional Comprehensive Plan Task Force

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SUBJECT: Homeland Security Chapter
Draft Policies and Recommendations

Recommended Action:

Provide input to staff regarding issues to be addressed in the Homeland Security Chapter of the Regional Comprehensive Plan, and report to the Transportation and Communication Committee.

BACKGROUND:

The SCAG region, along with many other major metropolitan areas, faces tremendous challenges in preparing for and responding to emergency situations, whether man-made or natural. The events of September 2001 illustrate the extent of these challenges and indicate the need for a regional approach to planning, preparation and responding to the threats of terrorism and/or natural disasters.

To assist the region in planning its response to emergencies a continuing, cooperative and collaborating regional approach is needed. The importance and the critical nature of the region's security and safety have prompted SCAG to include Homeland Security as a chapter in its Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP).

The RCP is being developed to serve as a tool for implementing existing regional policies and programs. The RCP consolidates and translates existing programs and policies of the RTP, its associated EIR and the Growth Visioning effort. However, lack of an established vision, goals, objectives, and subsequently, specific regional policies and strategies by SCAG pertaining to Homeland Security makes this very different than the other chapters in the Plan. The Homeland Security Chapter of the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) attempts to identify the roles and responsibility of SCAG as the regional planning agency in the pre- and post- emergency situations. The chapter presents recommended policy direction and actions for consideration by the Regional Council.

REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN HOMELAND SECURITY CHAPTER

January 7, 2005

I. INTRODUCTION

The events of September 11, 2001, illustrates the tremendous challenges that metropolitan areas and urban regions face in preparing and responding to unexpected terrorist incidents or natural disasters. The unexpected nature of such events requires extensive coordination and collaboration among all the agencies and organizations involved. Availability of information and coordination and communication among all “first responder” agencies, transportation operators, and many other organizations is essential.

The complex nature of such incidents and their potential threat to the region as well as the interdependency of the individual jurisdictions and organizations involved makes a regional approach to homeland security extremely critical. No event of significance is truly local, as political boundaries are permeable and local critical infrastructure may serve the entire Region. No jurisdiction stands alone: the high-risk, well-resourced municipality may be as dependent on a smaller jurisdiction for support in an emergency as the smaller jurisdiction is on the larger ones.

Since the events of September 2001, regional approaches have been recognized as a key way to address and respond to the threat of terrorism. In many urban areas, the threat of terror is regionwide, and resources for responding to that threat are distributed among many jurisdictions. Therefore, the most effective responses are coordinated and planned across the region, rather than being jurisdiction-specific. The complexity of multijurisdictional areas—such as the SCAG region, with a range of potential terrorism targets, presents significant challenges to coordinating and implementing effective homeland security programs.

To assist the region in the planning, preparation and response to emergencies, whether caused by natural or human elements, a continuing, cooperative and collective regional effort would be needed. To achieve such task, in the context of the Regional Comprehensive plan, this report has been prepared which identifies SCAG’s role and responsibility in regards to Homeland Security. It describes the current programs at the Federal, State and local levels; identifies security issues and vulnerability of the transportation infrastructure and information sharing; and presents policy recommendations and actions for consideration by the SCAG’s Regional Council.

II. SCOPE

The Homeland Security Chapter of the Regional Comprehensive Plan identifies the role and responsibility of SCAG as the regional planning agency in the pre and post emergency situations. The chapter contains recommended policy direction and actions for consideration by the SCAG’s Regional Council.

To better inform the Region's decision-makers on the issues and provide the information needed to formulate and adopt regional policies and strategies, security issues and vulnerability of transportation infrastructure and information sharing system have been identified. Additionally, a summary of the current efforts and programs by the Federal Government, State of California and the regional and local agencies has been provided. This institutional assessment is based on information provided by each of the respective agencies on their roles and responsibilities.

III. POTENTIAL ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR SCAG

Regional approach to addressing public policy issues and planning activities have been in practice for several decades. Transportation and environmental planning are examples of coordinating planning efforts within metropolitan areas.

The events of September 2001, have resulted in the emergence of homeland security as a public policy field and forcing many metropolitan areas in the country to realize the need for a regionally cooperative and collaborative approach in planning, preparation and response to emergencies, whether caused by natural or human elements.

As the regional MPO for southern California, SCAG includes representation from many different and diverse jurisdictions and stakeholders. It provides a forum for these parties to discuss public policy issues and agree on possible solutions.

To determine SCAG's role in "homeland security", a model developed by Dr. Michael D. Meyer, Georgia Institute of Technology, was applied. This model evaluates the potential role of an MPO in relationship to various phases of an incident/disaster. As defined by Dr. Meyer, security/disaster incident consists of the following six elements:

- Prevention: Stopping of an attack before it occurs; improved facility design; surveillance, monitoring
- Response/Mitigation: Reducing impacts of an attack; evacuation; identifying best routes; effective communication system
- Monitoring: Monitoring and evaluating incidents; surveillance, monitoring, sensing, public information
- Recovery: Facilitating and reconstruction, restoring operation of transportation system
- Investigation: Determination of causes, and responsible parties; security/ police activity
- Institutional Learning: Self-assessment of actions; feedback to prevention element

As defined by Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO), the role of MPOs in regional planning vary from region to region.

- *Traditional*: System management and operations role in the ongoing transportation planning activities. The primary responsibility for projects rests elsewhere.
- *Convener*: The MPO acts as a forum where operations plans can be discussed and coordinated with other plans in the region, still not responsible for operation and implementation.
- *Champion*: The MPO works aggressively to develop regional consensus on operations planning. MPO planners develop programs and projects and the MPO takes the lead in developing regional agreements on coordinated operations.
- *Developer*: MPO develops regional operation plans and incorporates operations strategies into the transportation plan. System-oriented performance measures would be used to identify strategic operations gaps in the transportation system.
- *Operator*: The MPO would be responsible for implementing operations strategies that were developed as part of the MPO-led planning process.

The following table, illustrates the possible role of an MPO in regards to various phases of an incident based on its type and function:

Incident Phase	Possible MPO Role				
	Traditional Role	Convener	Champion	Developer	Operator
Prevention	●	✓	✓	●	✗
Response/Mitigation	●	✓	✓	●	●
Monitoring/Information	●	✓	✓	●	✗
Recovery	●	✓	●	✗	✗
Investigation	●	✗	✗	✗	✗
Institutional Learning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Not likely Role



Minor Role



Lead Role



IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is working to identify regional strategies that would enhance the region's capabilities to deter and respond to acts of terrorism or natural disasters. As the MPO for the six-county Southern California region, SCAG could play a very important role in providing a forum for cooperative decision making and helping the region in coordinated planning in preparation and anticipation of potential future incidents and events; and coordinate public information dissemination strategies through the development of a centralized information source on the transportation system and infrastructure conditions.

Vision Statement

"A Region that is safe and secure."

Mission Statement

"To protect the region, its population, transportation infrastructure, and economy from acts of terrorism and natural disasters and to minimize their impacts and effects."

Proposed Goals

- Enhance the Region's capabilities to deter and to respond to unexpected terrorist incidents or natural disasters by strengthening relationships and outlining strategies for regional action among local, state and federal agencies.
- Improve the effectiveness of regional plans to allow for proper response by various agencies and maximizing the sharing and coordination of resources.
- Enhance the capabilities of local and regional organizations including first responders through provision and sharing of information.

Proposed Policies

- Ensuring the safety of the region's transportation system and infrastructure is a priority.
- Enhancing the region's ability to deter and respond to acts of terrorism or natural disasters through regionally cooperative and collaborative strategies.
- Provide the means for collaboration in planning, communication and information sharing before, during, or after a regional emergency for the region.

Proposed Actions

- Develop and incorporate strategies and actions pertaining to response and prevention of security incidents and events as part of the ongoing regional planning activities.
- Establish a forum for cooperation and coordination of plans and programs among the regional partners including first responders and operations agencies.
- Develop and establish a regional information sharing strategy, linking SCAG and its member jurisdictions for ongoing sharing and provision of information pertaining to the region's transportation system and other critical infrastructure.